

Literary Cabinet.

Si non tantus fructus perciperetur ex his studiis, quantum percipi constat, sed ex his delectatio sola peteretur; tamen hæc animi remissio judicanda esset libero homine dignissima. CICERO.

VOL. I.] YALE COLLEGE, SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 1807. [No. 18.

The Essayist.

No. XIII.

THE dignity of man, and the excellence of his nature, have ever afforded a delightful theme of contemplation to the curious and inquisitive mind. And whatever could illustrate the sentiment that man is the chief ornament of creation, has not failed of being represented in the most glowing colors. But there has been an astonishing diversity of opinion, respecting the *qualifications* necessary to insure his own happiness, and to promote that of others.

Some have strenuously maintained that the requisites in question, are peculiar to the epicure. Some have looked for them in the sensualist, and others in the patriot. One will refer you to the student, and another to the unambitious husbandman. But, in vain do we ransack the world, and scrutinize the conduct of man in our search after dignified traits of character, if we forget that civility constitutes one of the most important.

I am aware that in our schools, he who extols a human *virtue*, is considered rather as an object of pity, than as one who shall instruct by insinuation, amuse by his ingenuity, or prepossess by the excellence of his design. But

it affords me some consolation to believe, that an apology for virtue will not be unacceptable to the readers of the CABINET.

To determine precisely, to what degree of perfection mankind *have* arrived under the auspices of civility, shall not be so much my present object, as to investigate its specific *tendency* to invigorate the intellects, to soften and meliorate the manners of the rustic, to refine the taste, and to introduce harmony and all its useful concomitants into the bosom of society. Whatever is calculated to avert human woe and capacitate man for substantial enjoyment, ought to be invariably the distinguished object of all our pursuits. It is the province of the enthusiastic visionary, to conduct your imagination to the perennial fountain of unalloyed bliss; to that pure stream whose gentle current glides majestically along its exuberant banks, on which dwells an improved order of men, strangers to penury and adversity, whose only occupation is to mingle mutually in each other's delights, in which employment every exertion serves to swell the general wave of pleasure. It is also his office to enrapture you with a view of a society reformed in virtue, to the

utter exclusion of every litigant, every pestiferous fraud, and every tale of woe. But to avoid a vergency to either extreme, is viewing society in a golden mediocrity, arrived to that degree of refinement which is free from the imputation of vulgarity on the one hand, and on the other, is far removed from that excessive parade that attends the opulent, and from those unmeaning formalities which characterize the modes of address at the present day.

If we view man in a savage state, naked, and exposed to the inclemency of winter; illiterate, and open to the wiles of the crafty; indigent, and destitute of any more flattering prospects in the evening of life; merciless, and at the same moment obnoxious to the vengeful petulance of an insidious foe; we shall have occasion to venerate that hand that hath brought order out of confusion, hath exalted the standard of human excellence, and hath rendered honor, virtue, and happiness attainable by judicious exertion. From this view we shall be influenced to trace with delight the flowing paths of science; to emulate honorary distinction, and to unfold the powers of invention.

Civility inspires the breast of its possessor with a liberality of sentiment that argues ingenuousness, which alone attracts admiration, and is the ornament of man. It is the munificent hand of courtesy, richly loaded with blessings, that is so often extended to alleviate the lamentable situation of the indigent and forlorn. Like the wings of the morning, she flies in pursuit of some pitiable object, from whose troubled soul she may dispel darkness and gloom, and administer in profusion the oil of consola-

tion. She exhibits to the weary traveller that hospitality which so eminently distinguishes the real philanthropist. In a word, those thousand acts of kindness which are daily observed among the virtuous, are the spontaneous productions of a bosom warmed by the benign influences of civility.

Time was, when most men realized no other pleasure than that which consisted in the capricious exercise of volition, unrestrained by those laws of refinement which nations in later ages have sanctioned. Strangers were treated with the most contumelious indifference. Mutual confidence was not founded upon a liberal system. The coldness of winter pervaded those breasts that were designed by the Author of nature to impart and receive friendly advice and consolation. These traits of character afford us a specimen of what would now be the characteristic of society, had not civility diffused her genial and enlivening smiles to dissipate the thick mists of barbarism. Rankling discord, and severe recrimination would follow the most trivial difference of opinion. And, indeed, in those unenlightened regions, where civilization has never darted its brilliant rays, acrimony and revenge, qualified by native ferocity, have established their empire with unlimited sway. To detail the horrors of barbarism, and the direful effects of stupidity, would be unpleasant on my part, and equally undesirable on yours.

Under these impressions, we are prepared to despise the libertine, who inveighs against every kind of government that serves as a ligament to restrain vice, and to concentrate the affections of its subjects upon the general welfare. We are prepared to bid him a final

adieu if he shall expire before he has disseminated his poisonous principles, and they become too firmly rooted in the hearts of men, ever to be completely eradicated. Or we shall rejoice to behold the vitiated taste of nations so far reformed, as to resist boldly, the delusive charms of illuminatism. We shall rejoice to behold independency of sentiment, characterized by a thorough investigation of truth;—to find men convinced that they who most exclaim "*liberty and equality*," are often to be classed with those that make assertions without the slightest conviction of their justness or pertinency. But are not a considerable portion of mankind already too far advanced in pollution to be reclaimed to the esteem and practice of virtue? Has not vice stridden through the earth in an undissembled form—gaining confidence by every new instance of success? Does not luxury with its baneful concomitants, make constant inroads upon our manners, which were once distinguished for their sincerity and simplicity?

We are all too well informed, not to have known that a high degree of such refinement is incompatible with genuine courtesy. Is not that refinement which induces the female to abandon every object of pursuit that does not confer applause at her desire, to pursue trifling amusements, to the utter neglect of mental improvement, more prejudicial than that refinement which barely glimmers in the savage wilderness? It is an alarming consideration, that the fair sex, evidently formed to inspire men with delicate sentiments, and to modify their systems of enterprize, are fast approximating to a masculine

character, which it was their original and peculiar province to refine by example.

This remark is not designed to extenuate the conduct of gentlemen who are in the habit of deeming every assertion of a lady oracular—every species of her apparel decorous—and every motion worthy of imitation. In what a labyrinth of inconsistency are enveloped the amateurs of civility in its present character! They profess to have exalted to the highest pitch of excellence, the *standard* of politeness. But, alas! frigid as the polar regions, are the hearts of those who are chained to the observance of unmeaning ceremonies and servile formalities. Despicably sordid is that person whose bosom does not cherish emotions of genuine sympathy, gratitude, and philanthropy. How does he exhibit a conviction of his responsibility, who appears in gilded brocade only to dazzle, salutes only to flatter, and allures only to entangle and seduce! Such a character is the mere skeleton of a gentleman, a stranger to sensibility, to virtue, and to real friends.

[To be continued.]

On the Cultivation of a Taste for the Beauties of Nature.

[Concluded from page 135.]

AS by these means we are enabled to relish more highly the beauties of the poet, so also do we find ourselves better fitted for detecting his faults. In Nature we never see grandeur combined with meanness, or beauty with deformity.

Since the painter is an imitator of Nature no less than the poet, we may apply to his productions the observations which have been

already made upon those of the poet. It is not indeed so necessary, for the painter shows us Nature as she is, whilst the poet only presents her as she appears to him. Still however it is requisite that we should keep the original always before us. By studying the poet, we learn to discover new charms in painting; by studying the painter, our relish for poetry is improved, and by studying Nature, a light, hitherto unknown, seems to enliven every scene; and beauties, till now unnoticed, crowd every description.

But these are not the only advantages which may be derived from this source. The contemplation of scenery has a very powerful influence in softening the heart and refining the affections. Even in nations we may trace the efficacy of natural objects. How exactly conformable was the character of the Northern barbarian to the scenes among which he dwelt? The lofty mountains, covered with dark forests, and echoing only to the roar of torrents, or the howl of wild beasts; the gloom of the pathless vallies, the rugged and mournful appearance of Nature, could not but have rendered him bold and enterprising, ferocious and hardy. On the contrary, when we cast our eye on the mild scenery of the Torrid Zone, we see in it the disposition of the inhabitants. The pleasant shades, the spacious and beautiful plains, the rich variety of fruits, and the slow but majestic rivers, with which it abounds, are but so many representations of the softness, the indolence, and the luxury of the people. As with a nation, so also is it with an individual; except that the influence is less obvious,

if he does not endeavor to promote it. Every one, who has a taste for the beauties of scenery, must have felt how strongly they can affect him. What heart indeed, which thrills with transport at the sight of some sublime object, can give way to the suggestions of envy or resentment? What mind, that is lighted by a ray from the altar of Nature, can suffer itself to be darkened by avarice, hatred or suspicion? The calmness, which diffuses itself over the mind, after contemplating the beautiful and the grand, has a powerful tendency to improve the heart. Sometimes indeed we may be agitated and transported beyond ourselves by the awful and terrible scenes which we witness; but the softness and variety, which adorn Nature, are admirably fitted for producing pleasing emotions.—These, by being frequently excited, at last become habitual, and thus mould the character into a resemblance to themselves. This is one in which the dispositions of the mind come to be so similar to Nature, and that we observe so remarkable a contrast between the characters of different nations. This contrast is not however more striking than that which exists between the external appearance of the country. If we compare the rude Russian with the refined Italian, we shall find that the difference is not more remarkable, than that which is observable between the scenery of Russia and that of Italy.

But while we descant upon the advantages derived to us from the study of Nature, with regard to poetry, painting and the improvement of the heart, let us not pass over in silence the benefits which spring from it in solitude and

sorrow. When abandoned by the world, or when, retiring voluntarily from its troubles, we seek relief in some recess, what can afford greater satisfaction to a cultivated mind, after the enjoyments of religion and philosophy, than meditation on the works of Nature. Who, that has ever listened to the artless eloquence of Nature, that has heard her voice no less in the mild murmur of the breeze, than in the fury of the tempest, will not acknowledge the irresistible force with which she impresses the heart? Who has ever climbed with eager expectation the towering cliff, whence he contemplates the landscape below varied with dark forests and verdant hills, with the ocean dashing wildly beneath, and azure mountains fading in the distance, and has not felt a relief from sorrow? The mind, wholly employed on the objects before it, feels their influence too strongly to be affected by its own feelings. Every review of the scene discovers new beauties, which render it more highly interesting, and tend still more to call off the attention from mournful subjects. Even when reason has resigned her sway, and we yield to the power of sleep, imagination enlivens our dreams and soothes the troubled mind.

"..... Then the inexpressive strain

"Diffuses its enchantment: fancy dreams

"Of sacred fountains and Elysian groves,

"And vales of bliss."

Nothing perhaps can present the Creator in a more amiable light, than this capacity for receiving pleasure, notwithstanding present uneasiness. Then we may be literally said to smile through our tears. At first a kind of divine enthusiasm is kindled in the

mind, which transports us beyond ourselves, and for a time renders us completely happy. Soon however the remembrance of our misfortunes returns, and then we find the influence of the happiness, which we had recently enjoyed, in disarming grief of its sting. In the progress of time, sorrow entirely disappears, and then, as Akenside expresses it,

"..... The passions, gently soothed away,

"Sink to divine repose, and love and joy

"Alone are waking; love and joy serene

"As airs that fan the summer."

Nor should we here forget to mention the benefits which taste confers on the traveller, who, whether he witnesses the sublime or the beautiful, the awful or the placid scenes of Nature, may still derive pleasure from them. By possessing this source of amusement, he beguiles the otherwise tedious hours, and gives a degree of elegance and life to his narrative, for the absence of which nothing can atone.

Such then is the picture, which Nature presents to our view, when employed in examining her works. In it we perceive the most perfect symmetry and beauty, combined with utility and the means of producing the highest pleasure. The more we study her, the greater are the advantages and the purer the satisfaction which we derive. To her may be referred many of the characteristics, which distinguish nations, and which thus point out the influence of physical on moral causes. To the same cause may be attributed poetry, painting and their sisters, for the lap of Nature is the cradle of the fine arts. Hence also we discern one reason, why Europe is so eminently

distinguished, in these pursuits, above the other parts of the world.

In contemplating Nature, we are likewise enabled to derive more exquisite pleasure from the charms of poetry and painting. By the same means is solitude rendered more interesting, and calmness succeeds to grief.—The heart also is refined and made susceptible of the most delicate emotions. It is the study of Nature, in a word, which has its influence in raising man to a state of the highest improvement. It is this, which gives birth to genuine taste, to feeling and to sentiment, which affords the most refined enjoyment; which kindles enthusiasm, enriches imagination and forms the sculptor, the painter, the orator and the poet. If such is the power, and such the beauty of Nature, with justice may I exclaim in the language of the enraptured Akenside,

“..... O! attend
 “Who’er thou art, whom these delights can touch,
 “Whose candid bosom the refining love
 “Of Nature warms, O! listen to my song,
 “And I will guide thee to her favorite walks,
 “And teach thy solitude her voice to hear,
 “And point her loveliest features to thy view.”

—+—
 Extracted from the Memorandum of a stranger in New-Haven.

ARRIVED in New-Haven harbor Saturday afternoon—the vessel ran aground—set out to go ashore in the boat—ran the boat aground—another came and lighted us—got upon the wharf safe—found it made an acute angle with the shore. *Query*, If the wharf had been built perpendicular to the shore, would it not

have extended so far, that our boat would have reached it without running aground? Walked up and looked out for lodgings—found a good host—walked about town—saw the town clock on a shop—saw a large number of churches for so small a place—a great many religious people, probably—different from those New-Haveners that came passengers with me—saw a great many lawyers’ offices—lawyers live by the sins of the people, as the yankees say—ergo, there are a great many sinners here—not much like my last conclusion.—Saw a great many ladies riding on horseback—they appeared very fond of it—practice makes perfect—ergo, they will be good riders by and by—saw a grave-digger driving a hearse upon the run—the first man I have seen in a hurry in New-Haven—returned to my lodgings.

Sunday morning—concluded to go to church—went up to a church and found no one there—house built for show probably—*Query*, would not the town look better with fewer houses, if they were handsome—walked towards the college—the buildings stand pleasantly—students orderly—they don’t quarrel with the authority because they have not their mammas’ pantries to go to; as the Cambridge and Princeton boys do—under better government probably—walked into the chapel and heard the president preach—students got asleep in time of service—shameful practice. Sunday evening walked up to the new burying ground—saw there a great many people of both sexes, and of all classes, colors and sizes—no distinctions amongst the dead—returned to my lodgings.

The Bower.

.....Sometimes
We bid bright Fiction to resemble Truth,
And sometimes speak what Truth herself approves.

HES. THEOG.

SOLUTION OF THE CHARADE,

PAGE 136.

OF all the senses we can boast,
The eye must sure be valu'd most :
By this, compassion we excite,
And Cupid aims his shafts aright ;
Without it, when was beauty seen ?
The sun, the moon, the flowrets stain ?
How had we known the mountains rise ?
How without sight had man beenwise ?

What more resists the wintry storm
Than cliffs on cliffs—a mountains form ?
Could earth fierce Neptune's waves
withstand

Without the rock—the stony strand ?
Is not the pebbly swarm oft seen
Flying in zephyrs o'er the green ?
Did none e'er light within your eye ?
How flow'd the tears ! How did you
try

To extricate the painful guest ;
Yet all in vain—no peace—no rest—
Did you then doubt, or once deny,
That some rude foe was in your eye ?
Then did you use the *grand specific*,
The *eye-stone* justly term'd pacific ?
No pain it gave, but on its travel,
Found out the hard tenacious gravel,
In triumph brought the foe away,
And gave the eye the joy of day.

..... *Quis te mihi casus ademit.*
OVID.

HOW absence increases my love,
Impatient I wait for the hour
When I and my Delia shall rove
Again in her favorite bower.

How oft has the sun pass'd the west,
And Luna illumined my way
Since Cupid stole into my breast,
And bade me submit to his sway.

Full well I remember the time,
When first I beheld the sweet maid ;
'Twould baffle the efforts of rhyme,
To pencil the charms she display'd.
Ah love ! you've disturb'd my repose,
You've plunged into sorrow, my
heart :

May Delia her eyes never close,
Till she's pierc'd with a similar dart.

C.

As I have been wonderfully pleased
with the love-songs to Delia, to
Chloe, to Charlotte, and many oth-
ers, which have appeared in the
CABINET, it entered my noddle
that there was some charm in poet-
ry, which the ladies could not re-
sist, and I determined, in this man-
ner, to address the object of my
dearest affections—Miss Prudence.
Happily, I was not deceived, and
her, whom continued groans for
three years, made in prose, could
not move, a single piece of poetry
has won. This piece I publish for
the benefit of those who may be in
the situation of their humble servant
at the time of writing it.

AS arctic bears on frozen isles,
By hunger driven, seek for food,
So I have sought your gracious
smiles,

But you alas ! my prayer withstood.

Now, from the dungeon of despair,
With trembling hands, and flutter-
ing heart,

With face beclouded o'er with care,
And * gizzard pierc'd with many a
dart,

Once more I raise my suppliant voice,
Once more my fond request renew ;
O ! grant my suit, make me thy chioce,
My duck—my non pariel—My *Prue*.

O ! how I long to take a sip,
Whilst holding you upon my knee,
From your dear pouting, ruby lip,
Sweeter than juice from Maple tree.

Then I thy fragrant breath might
swell,

Which all my pains and cares would
cure ;

None can its sovereign virtues tell,
For whiskey is not half so pure.

Those lovely jasper eyes of thine,
Sparkling thy crow-tail locks a-
mong,

Would on thy faithful Johnny shine,
Like salted shad in darkness hung.

* This proves that the writer is not
an owl, which was thought necessary to
be done.

Alas ! those eyes my fate long since
Have seal'd ; their fires have pierc'd
my soul,
And like an over-roasted quince,
My heart is burnt, and turn'd to coal.
Then, dearest Prue, thy Johnny give
One pitying look to soothe his breast,
One sheeps-eye glance would make
him live,
One squint of love would make him
bless'd.

Spitzbergen's icy shores contain
Less frosts than in my bosom dwell,
When your more cruel, cold disdain
Inflicts such pain as none can tell.
It Icelandizes every part,
It Greenlandizes all my powers ;
Those *Hecclean* fires that burnt my heart
Condens'd now fall in icy showers.

O ! see me, destitute of all,
That can afford me joy in life ;
O ! see my torments, hear my call,
And grant me all I wish—a wife.
Heedless of hissings, sneers, and scorn,
From day to day I roam about,
With coat at both the elbows torn,
With stocking at the heels worn out,
And when, to rest my weary head,
My cotton sheets I get within,
The snowy curtains round my bed,
Remind me of thy whiter skin.
Then, then my heart begins to beat,
As though it through my ribs would
fly,
Striving to leave its hated seat,
And in its Mistress' presence die.
Thus I in farmer's yard have seen,
A coop'd-up gander strive to gain,
By pressing out the slats between,
His *quondam* friends, the gabbling
train.

But could I gain thee, O ! how sweet,
To sit, at evening, in our door,
After the mid-day's sultry heat,
And all our daily tasks are o'er ;
Or gently on the grass reclin'd,
We might observe the cooing dove,
And, in the meads, the stately hind,
Telling their evening tales of love.
With meekest look, before the gate,
Our little brindle cow would stand,
At leisure chewing, she would wait,
To give her milk at thy command.
Near her the sow would wallowing lie ;
The pigs, with voices clear and
sweet,

And curl'd-up tails, would leave their
stye,
Begging their dam to let them eat.
Then, dearest Prudence, don't delay,
Nor longer let thy Johnny sigh ;
Consent to be his bride to day,
And who would be more bless'd
than I ?

JOHNNY JEWSHARP.

ON A FAN.

Mary the least and slightest toy,
Can with resistless art employ.
This fan in meaner hand would prove,
An engine of small force in love ;
Yet she, with graceful air and mien,
Not to be told or safely seen,
Directs its motion with such art,
It wounds far more than Cupid's dart ;
Gives coolness to the matchless dame,
To every other breast a flame. C. C.

TO AMELIA.

And does Amelia's heart with rap-
ture swell,
Dance like a fairy sylph within her cell,
Distend its copious veins with thoughts
of love,
And swell her bosom guileless as the
dove ?
Oft does she heave a sacred anxious
sigh,
And fondly wish her ardent lover nigh ;
Oft are her midnight slumbers kindly
blest
With fairy visions, or a gnomelike
guest ;
Oft does her memory dwell upon that
scene,
When, by the midnight moon, and stars
serene,
Her William gave the last, the part-
ing kiss,
And bade adieu "to 'Melia and to
bliss." AUGUSTIN.

Says Ned to Dick, pray tell me true,
Why finest Ladies *belles* are nam'd,
For I have always thought that you
Knew all that to them appertained.
Says Dick, I do—tho' 'tis my boast,
That I by them am not esteem'd,
But, much revil'd, by every toast,
A spy upon their actions deem'd ;
Still, I will give, without delay,
An answer to thy question, Ned,
'Tis simply this—we know that they
Have nought but tongue within the
head.